

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hopcroft (U.S. Patent No. 6,621,387) hereinafter “Hopcroft”.

The Office action states that “The term relatively leaves the limitation open to a broad interpretation that any spring force reads on the claim limitations.” Accordingly, Applicant has amended claim 1 for clarification to recite that “a first electromechanical switch that ... is restorable by *a first spring force*; and a second electromechanical switch that... is restorable by *a second spring force, the second spring force being stronger than the first spring force*,” as claimed in claim 1. As amended, it is clear that the two spring forces require different spring forces. Hopcroft is silent on the limitation, and thus fails to anticipate claim 1.

As claims 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 21 are dependent either directly or indirectly on claim 1, claims 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 21 are patentable for at least the same reasons as the parent claim.

Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Nelson (U.S. Patent No. 7,053,736), hereinafter “Nelson”. As described above, claim 1 has been amended for clarification. Accordingly, Nelson fails to disclose “a first electromechanical switch that ... is restorable by a first spring force; and a second electromechanical switch that... is restorable by a second spring force, *the second spring force being stronger than the first spring force*,” as claimed in claim 1. As with Hopcroft, Nelson is silent on the limitation, and thus fails to anticipate claim 1.

As claim 3 is dependent on claim 1, claim 3 is patentable for at least the same reasons as the parent claim.

Claims 6-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Hopcroft. For at least the following reasons, the Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 1, from which claims 6-8 depend, has been amended. Therefore, the rejection has been rendered moot. The asserted reference of Hopcroft does not teach, suggest or otherwise render obvious "a first electromechanical switch that ... is restorable by a first spring force; and a second electromechanical switch that... is restorable by a second spring force, *the second spring force being stronger than the first spring force,*" as claimed in claim 1. Therefore, every limitation of claims 6-8 would not be taught, suggested, or otherwise rendered obvious or predictable by the prior art of record. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 6-8 are patentable over the prior art of record.

The Examiner has also stated that claims 11, 14, 17, 18-20 and 22 are allowable, but for depending upon a rejected base claim. The Applicant agrees that claims 11, 14, 17, 18-20 and 22 contain allowable subject matter, but elects not to amend them at this time.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned agent to expedite prosecution of the present application.

Application No.: 10/592,988
Amendment Dated: October 6, 2009
Response to Office Action of July 9, 2009

If there are any fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our
Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No.: NGB-41317.

Respectfully submitted,

PEARNE & GORDON LLP

By: /Aaron A. Fishman/
Aaron A. Fishman, Reg. No. 44,682

1801 East 9th Street
Suite 1200
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-3108
(216) 579-1700

Date: October 6, 2009